

From: Monte Smith [mailto:full_monte@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Tuesday, November 29, 2005 12:29 AM
To: MLPACComments@resources.ca.gov
Cc: mlpa@livingseaimages.com; jwolfe@igc.org; YScuba@californiadiivers.com
Subject: MLPACComments: Comments on the various Monterey Marine Environment proposals

I am a Dive Master with 40 years dive experience, and have been diving in Monterey for about 20 years. I originally started diving and game hunting when game was a lot more plentiful on the California coast. As a person who has interests in game fishing, abalone free-diving, and underwater photography, I have seen the population of many species of life decrease over the years. I have arrived at the conclusion that we need to designate "no-take" zones to keep some populations of fish and other wildlife at sustainable levels. Additionally, I think it is important for us to set aside marine environments that are close enough to population centers for the purpose of educating the public about ecological issues and conservation. You might say that this can be accomplished by an aquarium such as the Monterey Aquarium, but an aquarium without the marine environment to back it up is a poor representation of reality. We need natural marine environments that people can directly experience, not just on the beaches, but underwater too.

For these reasons, I request that the Edward F. Ricketts Marine Reserve from the Breakwater to Lovers Point gets full protection from kelp harvesting, spearfishing and diver hookings.

Additionally, the proposed "Package 2", while the best choice of the four choices, needs better protections for Cannery Row, Carmel and south of Point Lobos. We should protect these areas from fishing, kelp harvesting, and spearfishing so that we and future generations can experience the underwater environment in its most natural state.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Monte Smith